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Pritchard (D.M.) Athenian Democracy at War. Pp. xxiv + 287, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Cased, £75, US\$105. ISBN: 978-1-108-42291-8

Citation for published version:

Zaccarini, M 2019, 'Pritchard (D.M.) Athenian Democracy at War. Pp. xxiv + 287, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Cased, £75, US\$105. ISBN: 978-1-108-42291-8', *The Classical Review*, vol. 69, no. 1, pp. 1-3. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009840X19000982>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1017/S0009840X19000982](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009840X19000982)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Peer reviewed version

Published In:

The Classical Review

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PRITCHARD (D.M.) *Athenian Democracy at War*. Pp. xxiv + 287, ill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Cased, £75, US\$105. ISBN: 978-1-108-42291-8.

In this book P. analyses the military organisation of Athens and a number of related social, economic, and cultural issues. As pointed out in the *Preface*, each chapter (except ch. 3) expands, updates, or summarizes earlier publications from the author.

In ch. 1, P. convincingly locates the main reasons for Athens' 5th-century military "revolution" in her large population, economic advantage, and democratic constitution. In regard to the latter, P.'s intelligent and stimulating approach is based on recent statistical findings by political analysts which show how modern democracies, while generally avoiding fighting each other, tend to wage wars as frequently as other forms of government and to perform better: in turn, ancient Athens provides solid comparative ground to test modern theorizations of democracy and its war-making policies. P. rejects the long-settled idea that democracy emerged from military participation, although he acknowledges that social reforms tied to (esp. naval) warfare facilitated the process.

Ch. 2 analyses in detail Athens' four military "corps" (Th. 2.13). P. explains how hoplites were recruited and organized by tribal affiliation, but only briefly addresses the presence of metics among their ranks (52), as attested by Th. 2.13.7 and by the non-citizens recorded on tribal casualty lists. Archers are treated as the only regular (non-tribal) light corps: P.'s analysis would have been further enriched by a proper account of the role of other light troops (whose importance is acknowledged, 78-81), which were clearly distinguished from the archers (e.g. Th. 8.71.2). The interesting case of the cavalry, which was often regarded by ancient literature as a safer service and concerningly attached to anti-democratic sentiments, would have been benefitted from a more extensive discussion of the evidence provided e.g. by dedicated casualty lists (*SEG* 48.83, *IG* II² 5221-2: see P. Low, 'The monuments to the war dead in Classical Athens', in Ead., G. Oliver, P.J. Rhodes (eds), *Cultures of Commemoration*, Oxford 2012, 13-39, at 18-19) and public dedications (*IG* I³ 511-12) on the peculiar status and identity of the corps. The 4th-century decline of the archers and the cavalry is addressed mainly in terms of economic and political issues: these were certainly relevant, but there were also other detrimental factors, such as poor leadership, motivation, training, and physical shape (e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 3.3.3-4, 3.5.5-7; *Hipp.* 1.13-14; B. Keim, 'Xenophon's *Hipparchikos* and the Athenian embrace of citizen *philotimia*', *Polis* 35 (2018), 499-522). Lastly we find the "sailors" or, more correctly, the navy, for which P. highlights the interactions of different roles and social classes. His argument about the navy being an unappealing corps for farmers (45-6) does not seem to consider that the fleet regularly used to embark plenty of infantry, which means that infantrymen too, not just rowers, were often destined on overseas campaigns. This chapter, the longest in the book and one of the most engaging, convincingly dismisses assumptions about Solonian classes rigidly regulating access to Classical Athens' armed forces.

Chapter 3 discusses ancient comedy and the navy. P. adopts a comparative approach with tragedy, historiography, and especially forensic oratory, as a reflection of widespread popular views. The chapter explains why hoplite-centred warfare figures only as a part of Aristophanes' depictions, and that his positive acknowledgment of the navy is consistent with the arguments of the orators.

Chapter 4 deals with public spending on wars and festivals. P. shows that the average citizen was well versed in financial matters, thanks to practical expertise acquired through civic service. P. estimates, among the rest, the costs of the Great Panathenaea in the 380s and of the military in the 420s and 370s. Some of his figures seem far too precise to be credible, given the inevitable approximation dictated by the evidence – an issue which P. himself acknowledges (158-60). Most figures are cited as hard data: proper discussion is to be found in P.'s repeatedly cited *Public spending and Democracy* (2015). P. shows that Athens' chief item of expenditure was always the military, refuting the traditional (Böckh's) view that the city used to spend more on festivals, itself mainly based on Demosthenes' *First Philippic* and dismissed as "completely false" (154):

this may be the case, but then it would have been useful to explain how Demosthenes, who had vast financial expertise (E. Harris, 'Demosthenes and the theoric fund', in Id., *Law and Society in Ancient Athens*, Cambridge 2006, 121-39), could hope to raise a credible point in front of the competent assembly-goers (cp. the case of speakers in front of judges: M. Canevaro, 'Law and Justice', in G. Martin (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Demosthenes* (2019), 73-85). In fact, what Demosthenes 4.35 seems to criticize is mainly the poor management of military expeditions vis-à-vis that of festivals and, secondarily, that any single expedition received no more resources than the major festivals, which may not be that far from the truth.

Ch. 5 details the cost of the Peloponnesian war: P. reconstructs the skyrocketing military expense during the Archidamian war and its fluctuations with the peace of Nicias, the Sicilian expedition, and the Ionian war. Ch. 6 takes a wider geographical and chronological approach to public finances and warfare: after a narrative history of 5th- and 4th-century conflicts, a very brief overview of the Macedonian military and financial reforms, from the Classical into the Hellenistic period, further demonstrates the close interconnections between these fields.

Ch. 7 examines the "cultural overlap between sport and war", also on the basis of research in social sciences and anthropology. Despite being an upper-class activity, sport was valued and praised by the lower classes (but, consider [Xen.] *Ath.* 1.13), as reflected by popular views (cf. ch. 3). Democratic war and sport expressed and rewarded the same set of virtues, establishing a common ground between lower-class soldiers and upper-class athletes.

Ch. 8 deals with the Panhellenic games as a means for a community to display (military) power and earn fame: the individual athlete, his family, and the whole polis all gained prestige from athletic victory. This participative, bidirectional relationship between the citizen and his community is consistently found e.g. in Xenophon's theorization of military leadership and excellence (e.g. *Hipp.* 1.26) although, to be fair, he regards victory in war as far more glorious than that in sport (8.7).

P. raises many important issues about Athens' military peculiarities and innovations. The book, however, concentrates on the role of the military in the domestic sphere, but does not deal properly with the foreign context, i.e. Classical Athens' *actual* performance in war: if Athenian democracy was indeed so successful in transforming warfare and becoming "the eastern Mediterranean's superpower" (xv), how can one explain the fact that the city's military record is eventually punctuated with defeats, (at least) from Egypt to Chaeronea? Unfortunately, the lack of any conclusions prevents this collection from addressing such questions and bringing together its intuitions. In fact, the high number of repetitions and some significant thematic overlap (esp. among chs. 1-2, 4-5) suggests that limited effort has been devoted to confer an organic nature to this volume, which is essentially a compendium of P.'s impressive scholarly production. As such, this is an extremely useful and illuminating tool for a reader interested in a comprehensive, critical overview: in fact, this collection clearly aims to a wide audience, as shown by the choice to translate even words such as *demos* and *polis* – and repeatedly doing so throughout all chapters. The book adopts a fresh and refined methodological approach, which opens new interdisciplinary research opportunities: however, the price to pay for this is a sometimes cursory treatment of the historical context and a tendency to liberally combine very different sources in order to reconstruct a coherent picture. Classicists will often find the need to check the plethora of evidence discussed in this intelligent, thought-provoking book, by resorting to P.'s earlier, more detailed studies on each topic.